

Message Text

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56

ACTION SNM-02

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 AID-05 EA-07 CIAE-00 INR-07

IO-13 JUSE-00 NSAE-00 TRSE-00 USIA-06 NSC-05 OES-06

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R 211400Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2433

INFO AMEMBASSY MEXICO

AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

DEA HQTS WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L GUATEMALA 5166

STATE FOR AMBASSADOR VANCE, S/NM, MEXICO FOR DEA

E.'9. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SNAR, GT

SUBJ: NARCOTICS: POSSIBLE FUTURE OPIUM SOURCES

REF: STATE 173247

1. GUATEMALA HAS GREAT VARIET OF SOIL AND CLIMATIC
CONDITONS, SOME OF WHICH ARE SIMILAR TO CONDITIONS
PREVAILING IN SINALOA AND GUERRERO IN MEXICO AND WHICH
WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY BE SUITABLE FOR POPPY PRODUCTION.
THE FOOTHILLS OF SIERRA MADRE MOUNTAINS ALONG GUATEMALA'S
SOUTH COAST AND CUCHUMATAN MOUNTAINS IN THE WESTERN
HIGHLANDS WOULD BE ESPECIALY SUTIABLE, PARTICULARLY
SINCE SURVEILLANCE WOULD BE DIFFICULT. THE SOUTH COAST
ALSO HAS NUMEROUS UNSUPERVISED AIRSTRIPS.

2. IT IS NOT REPEAT NOT ILLEGAL TO GROW POPPIES IN
GUATEMAL, ALTHOUGH IT IS ILLEGAL TO USE POPPIES FOR
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NARCOTICS PRODUCTION. A VARIETY OF POPPY PLANT WITH

VERY SMALL BULB IS GROWN IN GUATEMALA AND SEEDS ARE
SOLD COMMERCIALY, APPARENTLY FOR FLOWER PRODUCTION.

3. DEA HAD HEARD RUMORS OF ILLICIT POPPY PRODUCTION
IN NORTHERN GUATEMALA AND ALONG BELIZE BORDER, BUT NO
HARD EVIDENCE IS AVAILABLE. OVERFLIGHTS OF BORDER
AREA BY THIRD-COUNTRY AIRCRAFT WOULD BE DIFFICULT
UNTIL GUATEMALA-BELIZE DISPUTE IS ENDED. POLICING OF
NORTHERN JUNGLE AND MOUNTAINOUS AREAS OF GUATEMALA
IS ALMOST NONESISTENT, WITH EXCEPTION OF OCCASIONAL
CUSTOMS POSTS NEAR BORDER AREAS. PRIVATE AIRSTRIPS
IN THESE AREAS ARE NUMEROUS AND UNSUPERVISED.
ANDREWS

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